

## **FLORENCE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**February 8, 2017**

**8:00PM**

### **CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE**

Council President Lovenduski called the meeting to order and led the Salute to the Flag.

### **SUNSHINE STATEMENT**

The Opening Statement was read by the Acting Township Clerk: Notice was sent to Trenton Times for information; posted on the municipal bulletin board; placed on the web-site on January 5, 2017. Notice was advertised in the Burlington Co. Times on January 8, 2017.

### **ROLL CALL**

Present: Frank Baldorossi, Paul Ostrander, Jerry Sandusky, David Woolston, Ted Lovenduski

Also present: Mayor Craig H. Wilkie; Richard A. Brook, Township Administrator; Thomas A. Sahol, Assistant Municipal Administrator; Kelly Grant, Esq., Township Attorney; Nancy Erlston, Acting Township Clerk

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Council President Lovenduski opened the meeting to the public. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to close the public comments.

### **BUSINESS**

#### **Township Water & Sewer Engineer**

- **Recommend Denying Release of Maintenance Bonds to NFI Real Estate**
- **Recommend Denying Release of Phase I Water & Sewer and Phase 2 Maintenance Bonds to Pulte Group (Estates at Oak Mill)**
- **Recommend Releasing Phase 3 Water & Sewer Performance Bonds to Pulte Group (Estates at Oak Mill)**

Administrator Brook said the review letters were provided in the packet. Often if the municipality is denying the release of a Performance or Maintenance Bond it is to protect the period of time that is allowed under the law. The companies understand why it is done. He reviewed Alaimo's recommendations and said Acting Clerk Erlston would prepare resolutions for next week's meeting.

#### **Township Engineer**

- **Recommend Final Payment No.3 to Richard T. Barrett Paving Company, Inc. for Boulevard Phase II.**
- **Recommend Final Payment No.3 to Richard T. Barrett Paving Company, Inc. for Old York Road Shared Use Bike Path**

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Administrator Brook said the work has gone very well with Barrett. Sometimes there are problems with restoration between the curb and the sidewalk. With respect to the work on the asphalt and the timing, and their willingness to be accommodating has been going very well. These are final payments for two projects that were completed. There were no major issues and everything was addressed.

### **Assistant Municipal Administrator**

- **Review Ordinance No. 2017-03 regarding removal of underground structures**

Assistant Administrator Sahol said after the last meeting he sat down with the Construction and Code employees. The intent was for the removal of anything that was man-made or constructed. Anything that was placed in the ground would have to be removed under the ordinance. It is for the benefit of future landowners to not have to incur that expense. That is how the ordinance was crafted. It was for any structure, not just swimming pools. Things don't get rolled in and buried. Everything, even foundation, has to be removed.

Administrator Brook apologized. He focused on underground swimming pools because there were some issues with some residents and pools that were knocked in many years ago. The inspectors are able to use reasonable discretion when the circumstances warrant it. An example was a cell tower foundation recently.

### **Township Administrator**

- **Convert from Manual to Electronic Tax Sale**

Administrator Brook distributed information provided by the Tax Collector. He explained currently the Township holds a conventional Tax Sale. If taxes are not paid in 2016, there would be a Tax Sale sometime in 2017. The municipality advertises a list of everyone that hasn't paid taxes by a certain date. The cost for the advertising is significant. There also have to be two personal mailings to the person or company. The ad must also be posted in five public places. That is the conventional procedure. On the day of the sale the entire Tax Office closes for at least a half day and a police officer is present. There are companies that essentially bid on the unpaid taxes. Their goal is to get the interest. They are buying a lien. There is quite a bidding war that takes place and it is a massive amount of time away from the Tax Office. Most of the time it is civil but occasionally there are issues.

He explained the State now permits municipalities to hold electronic Tax Sales. It is actually encouraging the electronic sales. There is no additional negative impact to the person who did not pay their taxes. The municipality would pass a resolution and would then ask for State approval for the electronic sale. Instead of running a legal ad in the newspaper with the list of names, the municipality would run a short block ad announcing the electronic sale. The block ad would still need to be posted in five public places. When it is posted the names would be listed. The Tax Sale notices would need to be mailed to those who were subject to tax sale. That has to be done three times during a four week period. A vendor is hired to run the electronic sale. They must be approved by the State. There are specific vendors that can be used. There is a cost for this.

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He listed some other municipalities who hold electronic sales. Many recommended it. The Tax Collector has done a great job researching the information and talking to other municipalities who use electronic Tax Sales. This saves the Township time and energy. It is more efficient. There is no additional burden on those who aren't paying their taxes. The Township would like to do it this year.

It is not an accelerated Tax Sale. That means if there are unpaid taxes in 2017 the Township can do a Tax Sale in December of 2017. Florence finds that to be cold hearted and there is no need for it. It puts more pressure on the homeowners. There is no reason for the Township to have to do an accelerated sale. He would like to have a resolution for the next meeting. All were in agreement.

Councilman Sandusky said he and Assistant Administrator Sahol met with a few young ladies about the Marconi Lodge property. They had some good ideas. One that was discussed was to have a community garden. It would enhance the empty property. He would like for the corner lot to look good. There could be individual plots for people to use. There seemed to be a lot of interest. Assistant Administrator Sahol said there is a Scout who is supposed to meet with him who is in need of an Eagle Scout project. This could be a good time before the spring planting season starts. If there was consent he believes there are many people who would want to help. Councilman Sandusky said the best aspect of this was that these two ladies were interested in doing something in that area to make the community look better. Councilman Baldorossi asked if the garden would be called Marconi. Many of the people who were members of the lodge lived in the neighborhood. Councilman Sandusky said the name was not discussed. Assistant Administrator Sahol said he doesn't see why the project can't move forward. There seems to be a lot of interest in the community and that is a good thing. It wouldn't take much to put a name on it someday.

Assistant Administrator Sahol said the larger parcel is a big piece and there are many good ideas for it also. The Township has heard many good ideas from residents and he believes there will be many more. One idea was for some supportive parking for the community. That is something that could rough sketched by the engineer to see how it would be. He also would retain some of the open area for children to use to play and run around. Council agreed to moving forward with the community garden.

### **Mayor**

Mayor Wilkie asked everyone be prepared for the projected snow tomorrow. Administrator Brook spoke to the Public Works and Water & Sewer Departments and they are ready. Administrator Brook said the employees would be in at 4am to do some pre-salting and prep work. The equipment that was purchased over the last couple of years makes a significant difference.

Administrator Brook said the Township has been accepting wastewater from the County. There have been some issues with zinc in the water. It has not impacted the Sewer Plant but it has drawn the attention of DEP. The DEP has been to the plant and met with the County. They are crafting a Remedial Action Plan. The County must now file a new plan with the State.

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When they do that the Township would need to provide a Statement of Consent. The County has been very cooperative. Whenever there has been an upset at the plant the Township calls them and they immediately stop all deliveries. The zinc issue is something the County is working on and they believe they have narrowed down the location and how the problem is occurring. It hasn't impacted the Township's Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Administrator Brook said he spoke to Council a few months ago about bringing Phoenix Advisors on board to review the overall debt service. When a municipality does a bond ordinance and physically borrows the money it is called a Bond Anticipation Note. After three years the municipality has to begin to pay the money back. There comes a point where principal payments must start to be made. The municipality needs to look and see what the best option is long term. It must go to permanent financing now. There will be a contract next week for Phoenix Advisors. It is a very reasonable contract. It can be cancelled at any time. The goal is to bring in an expert who can look at it and provide a clear evaluation. The options would then be presented to Council. Now is the time to prepare, much of the debt service dropped off.

Administrator Brook said Assistant Administrator Sahol has been working with the owners of Griffin Pipe. They have approached the Township with the possibility of putting solar panels on the old landfill. That would be a reuse. It isn't clear how far the request will go. It is something new for the Township. He wants to make sure anything that is done would have a positive impact on the Township's utility expenses. It is an option that is being explored.

He said he believes CME Associates was accidentally omitted from being appointed as a Special Conflicts Engineer. They have done a good job on the project they worked on. If Council was in agreements he would have them named as a Conflict Engineer at the next meeting. All it means is that if Maser has a conflict the Township could bring someone else in to handle the project competently.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Council President Lovenduski opened the meeting to the public.

Jennifer Brennan, 700 Olive Street, said she was driving down Cedar Lane and noticed the signage and she appreciated it. It looks great. It is very clear and was what she has been asking for. She saw a truck turning around on her street. Assistant Administrator Sahol said if she could tell him anything about the truck he would find out where it was coming from. Ms. Brennan said she has a picture of it but it was at home. Assistant Administrator Sahol requested she forward it to him and he would find out where it was from and make sure the facility educated the driver. Ms. Brennan asked if the name of Cedar Street or Cedar Lane could be changed so the truck drivers would not be confused. Mayor Wilkie said the people who live on the street would not agree with that. She asked if she could pass a petition for it. Mayor Wilkie said she could do that. Councilman Sandusky explained that if the name change happened the people living there would have to change anything and everything they have with their address. That is why there is usually opposition to changing the name of a street. She asked if there was another suggestion.

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Ms. Brennan said the last couple of days there had been a lot of noise that sounds like it is coming from the Turnpike. It sounds like a generator or a truck running and it is continuous. She asked if there was an update on what is going on with the Turnpike. Assistant Administrator Sahol said there has been a lot of activity and they are using the old road to get to the site of the repair. They don't report to the Township what they are doing.

Fred Wainwright, 1011 Cedar Lane, said he noticed there were cranes on the Turnpike. They are taking advantage of there not being traffic so it makes sense. He said behind the Bustleton Church in the Carty's woods there are trees being cut. There are a lot of trees hanging over the wires. He would like to see them be cleaned out. Assistant Administrator Sahol said Mr. Carty would have been the one who would have engaged the logger. Mr. Wainwright said it would make sense to get rid of the trees hanging on the wires while work is being done.

It was the Motion of Woolston, seconded by Ostrander to close the public comment. All ayes.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

8:31 PM MOTION of Ostrander and seconded by Sandusky to adjourn. Roll call vote – all ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston  
Acting Township Clerk  
/aek